Article 3

Opening minds to translanguaging pedagogies

Abstract

Translanguaging pedagogies promise to capitalise on students' language backgrounds, improve their academic achievements and address social inequalities. While research studies in monolingual, bilingual and multilingual contexts testify to the benefits of translanguaging for learning, well-being and identity-building, few studies focus on early childhood education and the use of more than two languages. Furthermore, little is known about the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies and the challenges faced by professionals.

This article is based on a longitudinal research project which offered a professional development course to develop multilingual pedagogies in early childhood education in Luxembourg, where 63.7% of the 4-year-olds do not speak Luxembourgish as their home language. The article presents challenges which three practitioners faced when implementing a translanguaging pedagogy in their preschool classes as well as the ways in which they overcame them. They changed their negative stance to multilingual education, developed a social-constructivist leaning environment and monitored their language use. The findings shed light on the complexities of the implementation process and the support needed for professional learning.

Key words: translanguaging pedagogy; beliefs; social-constructivist practice; early childhood; Luxembourg; multilingual; inclusion

1. Introduction

Globalisation continues to increase the diversity of the school population in many countries and educators and policy-makers try to find ways to capitalize on the students' range of language and cultural resources (Duarte, 2018; Garrity, Aquino-Sterling, & Day, 2015; Kirsch & Seele, forthcoming). Multilingual pedagogies (García & Flores, 2012) or translanguaging pedagogies (García, Flores, & Woodley, 2012; García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017) provide learners with transglossic learning arrangements and leverage their language repertoire for learning. Research findings suggest that these pedagogies contribute to language learning and identity building as well as raise academic achievements (e.g., Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 20122012; García & Sylvan, 2011; Young & Mary, 2016). Nevertheless, their implementation remains scarce and studies on translanguaging in early childhood education and care (ECEC) in contexts where more than two languages are used are rare (e.g., Kirsch, 2017). Most studies in ECEC have been carried out in dual-language or bilingual classrooms where two languages are used (e.g., Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Palviainen, Protassova, Mård-Miettinen, & Schwartz, 2016). To help put translanguaging pedagogies into practice and provide a foundation for further studies, García and colleagues (García et al. 2017) suggested a focus on three interrelated components: stance, design and shifts. Drawing on this framework, the present article addresses the research gaps by investigating the challenges that practitioners in early childhood education and care (ECEC) faced while implementing translanguaging pedagogies in multilingual Luxembourg. At the time of the data collection in 2016/2017, a monolingual language policy was in place which required all early childhood practitioners to focus on Luxembourgish. In that same school year, 63.7% of the 4-year-old preschool children did not speak Luxembourgish as their home language (MENJE, 2019). To help practitioners capitalise on children's linguistic resources

and develop multilingual pedagogies, the team of the research project MuLiPEC (Developing multilingual pedagogies in early childhood) offered a professional development course. This paper examines the challenges, practices, and professional learning of two teachers and one educator who participated in the professional development. The data stem from interviews and observations of professional development sessions and classroom activities collected over the course of one academic year. The article's findings shed light on the complexities of the implementation process and the support needed for professional learning.

2. Translanguaging as a pedagogy: definitions, implementation and practices

The following section defines translanguaging and reviews studies on translanguaging practices and the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies.

2.1 Definitions

Used in education, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, the concept of translanguaging has been continuously redefined over the last 20 years and came to be associated with strategies, practices, pedagogies, a space and a theory. García and Otheguy (2019) referred to several of these levels. Firstly, in their eyes, translanguaging denotes 'the strategic deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages' (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 283). Thus, speakers strategically select and combine resources from their unique linguistic repertoire to communicate in accordance with the socio-cultural demands at hand. Recently, translanguaging has been related to a semiotic rather than a linguistic repertoire (García & Otheguy, 2019). This is in line with the understanding of the interconnectedness and entanglement of the linguistic, paralinguistic, and extralinguistic resources for languaging and meaning-making (Li Wei & Lin, 2019). The focus of

translanguaging lies on languaging and transcendence, which, in this case, means going beyond named languages, beyond a linguistic system, and beyond an additive approach to bilingualism (Seltzer & García, 2019, p.13). Translanguaging has an ideological dimension in that it acknowledges the effects of named languages and language ideologies on language practices and student achievement. It therefore calls for educational practices built on dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009).

Understandably, the second dimension of translanguaging mentioned by García and Otheguy (2019) are pedagogical practices. Translanguaging as a pedagogical practice goes back to Williams (1994), who used the term *trawsiethu* (translanguaging) to denote a pedagogical practice in Wales where teachers and students systematically alternated between English and Welsh. The students were given input in one language and processed the information in the other. When García developed translanguaging pedagogies, she built on the Welsh model developed to revitalise the minority language Welsh, but she had a social and political agenda in mind. Translanguaging pedagogies (García et al., 2012; García et al. 2017) or multilingual pedagogies (García & Flores, 2012) challenge traditional linguistic norms, language ideologies, and monolingual practices indebted to racist and imperialist perspectives. They recognize the existence of multiple languages in schools and attempt to leverage the students' unitary semiotic system to make meaning and learn. The pedagogies are informed by social-constructivist learning theories (Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2010) that call for quality interactions, collaboration and participation. Teachers help students jointly construct knowledge through scaffolding strategies including contextualising speech (e.g. gestures, visuals), elaborating, asking, and modelling. They encourage meaningful and cognitively challenging interactions by offering opportunities for transglossic arrangements, thereby challenging traditional language hierarchies.

To help teachers put the pedagogy into practice and develop a basis for empirical research, García et al. (2017) suggested a focus on three interrelated strands; stance, design and shifts. *Stance* denotes the teachers' commitment to draw on students' full repertoires and consider them as resources; *design* regards the ways in which teachers plan to expose children to several languages through input, activities or a curriculum that enables them to connect home and school languages and cultures; *shifts* refer to the unplanned and flexible variations of the *design* to accommodate to children's needs.

2.2 Recent research studies on translanguaging

While a range of studies describe translanguaging practices as well as outcomes of such practices, fewer focus on the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies. These points will be developed in turn. Several studies have explored the translanguaging practices of teachers in ECEC. Whilst the terminology 'stance, design, shift' is recent and has not been used in many articles yet, the concepts themselves are not new and have been exemplified. Researchers in Luxembourg and France described the positive stance of teachers who embraced multilingualism, acted as multilingual models, raised the visibility of languages, and encouraged the use of multiple languages (e.g., Duarte, 2018; Kirsch, 2017; Young & Mary, 2016). These teachers, like some in the U.S., also designed classroom activities that provided children with authentic opportunities for multilingual and multimodal communication (e.g., Garrity et al., 2015). Finally, teachers were seen to work flexibly to accommodate the children's linguistic needs and translanguage. This was also the case for teachers in dual-language classrooms in the U.S. and bilingual classrooms in Israel where policies required language separation (e.g., Gort & Pontier, 2013; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Palviainen et al., 2016). Most of these studies also highlight positive outcomes of

translanguaging practices for pupils. Translanguaging has shown to contribute to children's meaning-making and knowledge construction (e.g., García & Sylvan, 2017; Kirsch, 2017); their linguistic, sociocultural and socioemotional development (e.g., Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Young & Mary, 2016), as well as their identity development (e.g., Garrity et al., 2015; Palviainen et al., 2016; Velasco & Fialais, 2018).

Recent studies with a focus on translanguaging pedagogies and their implementation, come from the Netherlands, the Basque Country, Singapore and South Africa. Some researchers emphasised positive student outcomes such as metalinguistic awareness (Duarte & Günther, 2018; Leonet, Cenoz, & Gorter, 2017; Vaish 2019a) and improved reading comprehension (Makalela, 2015). Others described newly developed practices. The report of the CUNY-NYSIEB project, which initially involved principals and teachers of 67 schools in New York, gives examples of promising practices of three primary school teachers, one of whom worked with multilingual learners speaking English, Spanish, Arabic, and Polish (Seltzer & García, 2019). Guzula, McKinney, and Tyler (2016) described the ways in which primary school teachers and pupils connected linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic resources to make-meaning in literacy and mathematics in South Africa. Vaish (2019a) provided insights into the teachers' translanguaging practices in primary schools in Singapore: they translated, explained, repeated and modelled. Few studies explored the challenges posed by the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies (or heteroglossic practices). Duarte and Günther (2018), who worked with 12 schools in the Netherlands, reported that teachers needed time to engage with the suggested holistic model of multilingual education that draws on Frisian, Dutch, English as well as the students' home languages. Vaish (2019 a, b) indicated three main challenges that teachers faced who tried to use English, Chinese and Malay systematically: the superdiversity of the school population, the negative attitudes

towards the home language, and the dominant teacher-centred pedagogy.

In conclusion, this section has indicated gaps in relation to the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies in ECEC and to studies undertaken in ECEC settings where more than two languages are used. (Such studies exist with older students in the Basque Country, the Netherlands or Singapore). The research project MuLiPEC in multilingual Luxembourg addresses these gaps by offering professional development (PD) to ECEC practitioners. This paper aims to investigate the challenges that two teachers and one educator faced while moving from a monolingual language policy to translanguaging pedagogies, the professional learning of these practitioners, and their newly developed multilingual practices.

3. Multilingual education in Luxembourg

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, a small country in Western Europe bordering France, Germany and Belgium, has three official languages: Luxembourgish, French and German. Its population is highly diverse and the percentage of residents who do not have Luxembourgish citizenship reached 47.5% in 2018 (STATEC, 2019). The Portuguese, followed by the French, Italians and Belgians, are the largest immigrant communities. To understand language use in Luxembourg, one must factor in the 188,000 daily people commuters from neighbouring countries, most speaking French. The 2011 census indicated that the languages most spoken at home, in school and at work are Luxembourgish, French, German, English and Portuguese, with every resident speaking at least two languages every day (Fehlen & Heinz, 2016). (In other words, residents are at least bilingual.) Portuguese is widely spoken owing to the size of the community; English gained importance in the workplace and in society on account of the population's growing heterogeneity.

Owing to increase in children who do not speak Luxembourgish upon enrolment at preschool and the high rate of underachievement of children of migrant background and low socioeconomic status (MENJE, 2019), the Ministry of Education made several changes to the early childhood education system. First, it made the two-year preschool for four- to six-year-olds compulsory in 1992 and introduced the *éducation précoce*, a voluntary preschool year for children aged three in 1998. While teachers work in preschools, a teacher and a qualified educator collaborate in the *précoce*. Secondly, it regrouped both offers into formal education and asked the practitioners to follow a national school curriculum. Thirdly, it developed the non-formal education sector (e.g. day-care centers, *crèches*) for children from birth to four. One main reason for the push of the non-formal sector was the provision of Luxembourgish which became the language of integration. It is supposed to contribute to social cohesion and equal opportunities as well as improve children's skills in Luxembourgish (MENJE & SNJ, 2018). Furthermore, it is expected to raise achievements in German, owing to the linguistic links between Luxembourgish and German. German is taught from Year 1 in the trilingual education system school. Finally, the government made changes to the Children and Youth Act and the Primary Education Act in 2017 and called for multilingual education in the formal and the non-formal education sectors. Since the Autumn of 2017, teachers and educators are required to develop skills in Luxembourgish, familiarize pupils with French and value their home languages. The objectives of the new programme include open-mindedness, curiosity and language development (MENJE & SNJ, 2018). While the PD referred to in the present article took place before these policy changes, the participating teachers and educators were aware of the law projects and keen to change their practice to better accommodate the children's linguistic needs and perhaps also prepare themselves to the multilingual education programme.

4. MuLiPEC: Developing multilingual pedagogies in Early Childhood

The wish to develop an effective and inclusive multilingual approach to meet the needs of the diverse student population and the unequal opportunities in Luxembourg led to the research project MuLiPEC (2016-2019). Following the multilingual pedagogies (García & Flores, 2012; García et al., 2012), the research team aimed to develop a resource-oriented pedagogy which capitalized on children's multilingual resources. At the heart of the project was a PD course offered to teachers and educators in the formal and non-formal sectors. It aimed to further the practitioners' understanding of multilingualism and language learning, and help them implement activities in Luxembourgish, French and other home languages. To this effect, we discussed perspectives on multilingualism, social-constructivist theories of language learning, and pedagogical principles. We also presented and developed literacy activities using books, songs and rhymes. Finally, we explored the strategic use of Luxembourgish, French, and home languages to support language learning and knowledge construction both in planned activities and everyday practices such as conversations and daily routines.

Based on successful PD approaches (Egert et al., 2018; Peleman et al., 2018), the team designed a long-term, collaborative, inquiry-based, and performance-based model that promoted reflection. We asked the practitioners to plan and carry out activities in French and in the home languages, and video-record these. In the training sessions, we discussed both these recordings and those produced by the researchers during their visits in schools and crèches. The PD had three strands: a 15-hour training on multilingualism and language learning, six network meetings and coaching. While 46 teachers and educators attended the

initial training, we selected seven volunteers to continue over one academic year (2016/2017) based on the following criteria: the final group needed to include practitioners who worked in different institutions (e.g. preschool, *précoce*, *crèches*, day care centres), with different age groups, and in locations where the language diversity and the socio-economic backgrounds of the children varied. The seven practitioners, in this case three from the formal sector, attended the network meetings and were coached by Kirsch. The present article is based on the experiences of implementing a translanguaging pedagogy of three practitioners in the formal sector.

4.1 The participants

Ms Vivian (teacher), Ms Clara (teacher) and Ms Jane (educator) were experienced practitioners having worked for more than ten years. They were aged between 30 and 39, spoke Luxembourgish at home and communicated fluently in German, French and English. This command of multiple languages is the result of language learning at school and societal multilingualism (Fehlen & Heinz, 2016). Ms Vivian and Ms Clara had additionally learned Spanish and Portuguese, respectively, through their partner. Ms Jane learned some expressions in Portuguese during the data collection. Ms Vivian taught in a preschool in a town close to Luxembourg city. The preschool and adjacent school catered mainly for middle-class families of diverse backgrounds. The 18 children in her class spoke 12 different languages. By contrast, the *précoce* class led by Ms Clara and Ms Jane was in a small building at the outskirts of a town in South Luxembourg. They taught 11 children, all of ethnic minority background and of low socioeconomic status. Most children spoke Portuguese and Cape Verdean Creole and none spoke Luxembourgish at home. Table 1 provides an overview of the practitioners and the children.

Table 1. Overview of the practitioners

Practitioners	School	Languages spoken by the adults	Nr of chil-dren	Home languages of children
Ms. Clara	*Précoce*	L, G, Fr, En, P	11	Ar, Cv, Fr, P, SCB
Ms. Jane		L, G, Fr, En, (P)		
Ms. Vivian	Preschool	L, G, Fr, En, Sp	18	Ar, Al, Ch, Cz, En, Es, Fr, G, Fi, L, P, Sp

The following letters stand for the languages: Ar - Arabic, Al - Albanian, SCB - Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian, Ch - Chinese, Cv - Cape Verdean Créole, Cz - Czech, En - English, Fr - French, Fi - Finish, G - German, L - Luxembourgish, P - Portuguese, Sp - Spanish.

4.2 Methods of data analysis

The three practitioners were regularly interviewed and observed by the research team (Kirsch, the PhD candidate Mortini, and a research assistant). Ms Clara and Ms Jane were interviewed together as they shared a class. The data used in this article stem from 6 video-recorded PD sessions, 10 interviews, and 80 video-recordings of language activities observed over 30 days. These activities included storytelling, language activities (e.g. memory games), ritualised activities (e.g. counting, weather during the morning circle), singing and creative activities (e.g. art work). Table 2 provides an overview of these data.

Table 2. Overview of the language activities

Number of activities	Story-telling	Language activities	Ritualized activities	Singing	Creative activities	Number of activities
Preschool	7	11	10	6	6	40
Précoce	7	10	10	6	7	40

The qualitative analysis included thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), a micro-analysis of the adult-child interactions, and triangulation (Flick, 2011). This paper reanalyses findings from previous articles (Kirsch et al., 2020; Kirsch, 2020; Kirsch & Seele, forthcoming) based on the three components of translanguaging pedagogies (stance, design, shift) to examine the process of implementing translanguaging pedagogies and the professional learning.

5. Overcoming challenges

The following sections present the challenges relating to stance, social-constructivist teaching approaches, and strategic language shifts and present the ways in which the three practitioners addressed their negative attitudes towards multilingual education, the pressure of a monolingual language-in-education policy, their frail understanding of social-constructivist learning theories, their teacher-centred pedagogy, and the need to monitor language use.

5.1 Moving towards a positive stance to multilingual education

Some studies show that teachers engage very little with diversity, overlook their students' resources and have a limited understanding of the multidimensional nature of multilingualism (Catalano, Shende, & Suh, 2018). Our data at the beginning of the PD indicate that the three practitioners like the other 43 participants, believed that multilingualism was an asset. This was to be expected because they are multilingual themselves, work in a multilingual education system and live in a multilingual country. By contrast, they were all sceptical about multilingual education and at first reluctant to use French and home languages more systematically as they believed it hindered the learning of Luxembourgish (Kirsch & Aleksić, 2018). Ms Vivian explained that she rarely sang songs in languages other than

Luxembourgish apart from 'happy birthday' in English and 'Brother John' (*Frère Jacques*) in French 'because I always thought that I take away these few minutes from the children to learn Luxembourgish' (interview, September 2016). The three practitioners' reasons for their focus on the institutional language were common: maximising the time to learn the target language (time-on-task-hypothesis by Rossell & Baker, 1996), fear of confusion (see Palmer, Martínez, Mateus, & Henderson (2014) on language separation), adhering to the language policy (Catalano et al., 2018), and pressure from parents and teachers. One of the aims of the *précoce* and the preschool is the development of Luxembourgish, and parents enrolled their children in the *précoce* for this very reason, claimed Ms Clara and Ms Jane. Similarly, the parents in Ms Vivian's class expected a focus on Luxembourgish which they believed to be a bridge to language and literacy acquisition in German in Year 1.

The challenge therefore consisted in helping Ms Vivian, Ms Clara and Ms Jane develop a positive stance to multilingual education through encouraging reflection on attitudes towards multilingual education, monolingual ideologies, and language policies. The three practitioners noticed some inconsistencies in their language practices. Despite their focus on Luxembourgish, they allowed children at the beginning of the school year to use their home languages, particularly in free-play, arguing that it 'helps children feel well, accepted, understood, secure' (interview Ms Clara, September 2016). Thus, they had some understanding of the relationship between home languages, well-being and identity-building (Cummins, 2009). This explains why Ms Clara and Ms Jane also reverted at times to children's home languages, when they knew them, to translate instructions or explanations. Ms Jane reported that she made Ms Clara aware of her rare use of Portuguese as Ms Clara switched automatically. While this flexible language use is normal in their daily life (Fehlen & Heinz, 2016), it was not legitimate in the classroom. Thus the next challenge consisted in

helping the practitioners understand that translanguaging, in this case moving between Luxemburgish and home languages, furthered rather than impeded language learning (García, 2009; Langeloo, Mascareño, Deunk, Klitzing, & Strijbos, 2019).

From February 2017, the practitioners let the children use their home languages throughout the day while bearing in mind their goal to develop Luxembourgish and introduce some French. The use of the home languages made the children secure and helped them develop relationships.

> I managed that children felt well, that children felt emotionally strong in class, that they felt included in the class… They had confidence in me and felt secure. Because I let them play in their language, I think, new friendships developed.
> (Interviews Ms Vivian, April 2017, September 2017).

Translanguaging has been shown to improve relationships and promote language learning because the former is prerequisite for the latter (Allard, 2017). Furthermore, opening a door to the home language did not lead to the 'exodus' of Luxembourgish (Rosiers et al., 2018, p. 27). Rather, the use of the home language increased children's opportunities to express themselves and as a result, they tried to speak more Luxembourgish. They 'were very motivated and wished to say a lot' (interview Ms Clara, January 2017) and 'did not learn less Luxembourgish because I sometimes told a story in German or French' (interview Ms Vivian, September 2017).

The use of the home languages had also a positive effect on the practitioners. Apart from feeling liberated, Ms Jane picked up some Portuguese from the children, turning into a role model (interview April 2017). Positioning herself as a learner signalled that she wished to

'share identity and solidarity' (Arthur & Martin, 2006, p.196) which improved the teacher-pupil-relationships and responsiveness.

> Ms Jane: We accepted it [multilingualism]. There were times when we said "no, we do not speak this, we speak Luxembourgish". We let them choose the language, they felt comfortable with.

> Ms Clara: I don't know how to say it, less constrained by the need "I have to focus on Luxembourgish". One is freer. One notices more of the children and one can be more responsive at this moment. One knows them better and reacts differently.

> Ms Jane: But they reacted very differently too, I found, because we let them communicate in their home language with us and the children.

> Ms Clara: We were very close to them.

> (Interview, May 2017)

The children's motivation and the success of the first activities in French propelled the planning of more activities in French and home languages, as requested in the professional development. The experience of implementing new language activities and its success as well as the reflection on language practices and policies, contributed to changing the practitioners' stance. In sum, this first section has shown that the practitioners changed their beliefs towards multilingual education, developed a better understanding of language learning, and embraced multilingualism owing both to the PD and their new classroom experiences. As such, these findings echo others that show that beliefs can be changed through PD (Egert et al., 2018; Peleman et al., 2018) and experiences of implementing change (Gorter & Arocena, this special issue; Palviainen et al., 2016).

5.2 Moving towards a social-constructivist classroom design and legitimating translanguaging

While a positive stance and a good understanding of language learning are a prerequisite for translanguaging pedagogies, teachers also need to develop practices underpinned by social-constructivist theories (García & Flores, 2012; García et al., 2017). The three practitioners were not used to designing a child-centred learning environment. The challenges therefore consisted in helping them understand their role in promoting language learning and develop effective methods (e.g. dialogic reading) and language-supportive strategies (e.g. questions, translations, elaborations, corrective feedback).

In the first network meeting in October 2016, the practitioners were given a series of pictures of people and objects, and asked to choose a picture that best represented their view of learning. Ms Vivian and Ms Jane chose a funnel and explained that children need input from adults and that the output depends on children's experiences as well as language and cognitive skills. By contrast, Ms Clara chose a picture of mountain climbers joined by a rope. She highlighted the social and affective aspects of learning as well as the need for a coach. These group discussions as well as the classroom observations indicated that the practitioners conceived differently of their role as teachers. While Ms Vivian's teaching was initially highly structured and adult-centred, the roles of Ms Clara and Ms Jane varied. During free play, which could initially last for two hours each morning, the children played with little involvement of Ms Clara and Ms Jane. By contrast, when it came to developing Luxembourgish, these practitioners adopted a structured approach and taught colours, days of the week, numbers or animals in Luxembourgish only. The video-recorded activities produced by all participants and shared in the professional development, made Ms Clara and

Ms Jane aware that the practitioners in the non-formal sector engaged children in a far less formal way, that activities were more fun, and that children developed language skills while engaging in meaningful conversations (interview, September 2016). The *précoce* teachers seemed unaware of the potential of non-formal learning situations for language learning.

> I became aware that that children learn more throughout the day than I was aware. I always thought that I needed to do a language activity to promote learning.
>
> (Interview Ms Clara, July 2017)

The discussions and reflections impacted on the three practitioners' teaching which became more child-centred as will be shown in the next sections.

5.2.1. Moving to translanguaging pedagogies: Ms Clara and Ms Jane

From January 2017, Ms Clara and Ms Jane planned a multilingual book project with 'activities that are fun and not boring' (interview, January 2017). In addition to speaking Luxembourgish, they chose to work in French and the children's home languages, as advocated in our professional development course. The choice of books came from the children and the project lasted several months, much to the practitioners' surprise. One of the books was about pirates. Ms Clara and Ms Jane organised a range of activities: playing and dressing up as pirates, art work, a treasure hunt, memory games, and storytelling. To support language development, they engaged in dialogic reading and deployed language-supportive strategies as seen in Excerpt 1. (The original utterances in Luxembourgish are in normal font, those in Portuguese in italics.)

Excerpt 1 February 2017

Ms Jane: Wat ass dat do? Kuck emol. [What's that? Look]

Yan: *É um avião*. [It's a plane.]

Aayan: *É um pirata.* [It's a pirate.]

Ms Jane: Oh, méngs de? Piraten. [Uh, do you think so? Pirates.]

Fabrizio: *Ele tem bigode.* [He has a moustache.]

Ana: *Ele tem bigode.* [He has a moustache.]

Ms Jane: En huet e Baart. [He has a beard.]

Aayan: E Baart. [E beard.]

Lara: *Ele está a chorar.* [He is crying.]

Ms Jane: Hee kräischt. [He is crying.]

Santiago: Kräischt [Crying.]

Ms Jane: Dann kommt, an dann zielen ech iech d'Geschicht an dann kucken mir firwat hie

kräischt. [Then come, then I tell you the story and we find out why he cries.]

Lara: *Ele está triste.* [He is sad.]

Ms Jane: Heen ass traureg, jo. [He is sad, yes.]

Excerpt 1 shows that Ms Jane systematically drew on children's utterances and translated

them into Luxembourgish to ensure that all children could follow and participate. She

confirmed correct answers (e.g., 'he is crying'), offered corrective feedback (e.g. 'he has a

beard'), asked questions to engage children and created a meaningful learning environment

(e.g. finding out why the pirate was sad). In doing so, she enacted her bilingual competence,

communicating in Luxembourgish and drawing on her developing skills in Portuguese. The

three-year olds translanguaged as well: they communicated in Portuguese, repeated

utterances in Portuguese and Luxembourgish, and pointed to details on the pictures. During

the remainder of the story not displayed here, they also spoke, gestured and acted. Translanguaging meant that the practitioners and the children assembled features of their linguistic, paralinguistic and extralinguistic repertoire (Li Wei & Lin, 2019; Guzula et al. 2016).

At the end of this book project, the children produced their own books in their home languages. The parents came to read books in Portuguese and French and translated the books into the home language. Overall, these findings show that Ms Clara and Ms Jane paid greater attention to the children's needs and interests and worked in a less formal way. 'Learning happened in a livelier way and was not as strict as before' explained Ms Clara in an interview in September 2017. Ms Clara's and Ms Jane's growing understanding of scaffolding child-initiated learning processes through dialogue and language-supportive strategies, resembled the professional learning reported by Bleach (2013) and Blenkin and Hutchin (1998).

5.2.2. Ms Vivian's professional learning trajectory

Over the course of the PD, Ms Vivian distanced herself from her teacher-centred approach and gave more room to child-initiated interactions. The following quote testifies to her professional learning:

> I became more aware of how I talked to the children. (…) I am more aware of the diversity and the need to not only give input but let the children speak more. (Interview, September 2017)

The classroom observations showed that she paid close attention to children's language needs, accepted answers in home languages, and elaborated on these. The following

exchange about lions in February 2017 is a representative example of the first half of the school year where many four-year-olds were still in their early stages of developing Luxembourgish. The conversation in Excerpt 2 took place in Luxembourgish, French and Spanish. Gael was one of several French-speaking children who was in the process of developing Luxembourgish and found it easier to express himself in French while Spanish-speaking George had only arrived to Luxembourg in October 2016. (Utterances in French are in italics, those in Spanish are underlined.)

Excerpt 2 (observed by Mortini), February 2017

Ms Vivian (pointing to the mane of the lion in a picture): Wat ass dat doten dann? Dat ass seng, wien weess dat? [What is this? That's his, who knows it?]

Gael: *Visage, visage.* [Face, face.]

Ms Vivian: Jo, do huet hie säi Gesiicht a wat huet hien do ronderëm säi Gesiicht? [Yes, there is his face. And what does he have around his face?]

George (raising his hand)

Ms Vivian: Ja, George. [Yes, George.]

George: Los leones pueden andar sobre la agua que no es tan profunda. [The lions can walk on the water that is not so deep.]

Ms Vivian: Ok, de George seet Léiwen, déi trëppelen am Waasser wann d'Waasser net ganz déif ass. Ehm, ganz richteg' [Ok, George says that lions, they walk in the water when it is not very deep. Uh, correct.]

In this conversation, Ms Vivian accepted the children's answers in French and Spanish, confirming them and translating them into Luxembourgish to help the classmates understand the contributions. She also elaborated on the utterances to support the development of Luxembourgish. The translation and the praise indicate that contributions in home language are welcome and worthy of being shared even if the answers were not the expected ones. Gael and George were likely to feel included in this community of language learners and realise that bilingualism is an asset. This practice is likely to contribute to their socioemotional and identify development (Young & Mary, 2016). Like Ms Jane in Excerpt 1, Ms Vivian portrayed herself as a multilingual, able to understand three languages, but she only communicated in Luxembourgish here. On other occasions, she would also communicate in French or Spanish, if she felt that it promoted comprehension and encouraged participation.

Like her colleagues in the *précoce*, Ms Vivian succeeded in designing a holistic learning environment where children had multiple opportunities to make meaningful connections between activities and between the languages used at home and in the institution (Andúgar & Cortina-Peréz, 2018; Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Gort & Pontier, 2013; Seltzer & García 2019). Two examples illustrate the case. In February 2017, Ms Vivian planned a topic on elephants with a series of interdisciplinary activities. She developed subject knowledge through conversations in Luxembourgish and with two video clips in German and French which the German and French-speaking children explained to peers. She promoted language and literacy learning through stories and worked on height and shapes in mathematics and arts. In April, she designed a project on colours. She told stories in Luxembourgish, German and French and invited children to retell the stories in their home language in class or collaboratively on the App iTEO (Kirsch, 2017). To successfully carry out activities around

stories in German and French, she needed to use a range of strategies to support

comprehension and participation. Excerpt 3 is from the retelling of Lionni's story 'Petit-Bleu

et Petit-Jaune'. The original utterances in French are in italics.

Excerpt 3, April, 2017

Ms Vivian: *Puis ils font une ronde, une danse.* [Then, they make a round, a dance.]

Olaf: Si spille Verstoppches. [They play hide-and-seek.]

Ms Vivian: *Mais oui, très bien! Ça c'est là. Ils jouent à cache-cache.* [Yes, very good.

This is here. They play hide-and-seek.]

Ms Vivian points to this detail on the picture.

Olaf: Ehm, Giel plus Gréng gëtt, nee, Giel a Blo gëtt Gréng. [Uh, yellow and green makes,

no, yellow and blue makes green.]

Ms Vivian (pointing): *C'est vrai le jaune et le bleu ça fait du vert.* [That's correct, yellow

and blue makes green.]

Tanja: Dofir ass et gréng. [Therefore he is green.]

In this excerpt, Ms Vivian pointed to pictures and used synonyms (round/ dance) and

cognates (the words dance in Luxembourgish and French) to facilitate comprehension and

enhance language awareness. She let children use the language of their choice to make

meaning and then built on their utterances, confirming, praising and translating. These

strategies - similar ones have been used in Excerpts 1 and 2 - are typical for teacher-

translangugaing (e.g., Kirsch, 2017; Vaish, 2019a). Using translanguaging, she demonstrated

a multilingual identity and positioned children as multilinguals as well, although many did

not understand French yet. These are essential strategies of a translanguaging pedagogy according to Palmer et al. (2014). Apart from familiarising children with languages, this activity promoted positive attitudes to language learning. Ms Vivian commented that she was delighted to see that German-speaking Olaf opened up to French (interview, May 2017). During the first storytelling, he listened but did not actively participate. His mime suggested that he was displeased because he did not understand French. In the second session, he demonstrated his comprehension by making comments in Luxembourgish which Ms Vivian translated into French. Olaf eventually had an 'aha-moment' (interview, May 2017) as he realised that he could understand the French story by transferring skills from one language to another: the four-year-old drew on his knowledge of colours and metalinguistic skills, comparing words across languages. The development of metalinguistic awareness can be an outcome of translanguaging (e.g., Leonet et al. 2017; Vaish 2019a; Velasco & Vialais (2016). Ms Vivian believed that this positive attitude and language awareness are important in a multilingual education system.

In sum, the findings show that the three practitioners embraced multilingualism and learned to design activities that helped children develop Luxembourgish and familiarise themselves with other languages. They found a balance between guided activities and more informal and child-centred ones (Jopling, Whitmarsh, & Hadfield, 2013; Hayes et al. 2013). Furthermore, they succeeded in scaffolding children's language development through using language-supportive strategies such as repeating, asking questions, giving corrective feedback and encouraging interactions in multiple languages. Translanguaging was necessary to help children make-meaning in activities in Luxembourgish, French, and other home languages. Excerpts 1, 2 and 3 illustrate that the practitioners used Luxembourgish or French and that children in the process of developing a target language used home languages or

Luxembourgish. This language alternation seems to be more closely related to the pedagogical translanguaging in the Basque country (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017) and the translanguaging pedagogy in Wales (Lewis et al., 2012) than the more fluid practices in the U.S. (Seltzer & García, 2019). One needs to bear in mind that the three- and four-year-olds in Luxembourg were in the process of developing multiple languages unlike the learners in the studies reported above. Furthermore, the aim of the language-in-education policy in Luxembourg is not bilingualism. Nevertheless, the children used their linguistic resources flexibly. As explained in Kirsch et al. (2020), the adults and children used features of two or more named languages in 59% of the video-recorded activities in the *précoce* and in 65% of those in the preschool class.

5.3 Moving towards responsible translanguaging

One challenge we encountered in our PD was the danger of translanguaging without any pedagogical intention. Weber (2014) warned against accepting flexible bilingual practices without any responsible reflection, holding that it is crucial to 'set up an ethical and responsible theory of flexible multilingual education' (p. 7). In a similar vein, García (2009), and Mård-Miettinen, Palviainen, & Palojärvi (2018), called for 'responsible code-switching' and Kirsch (2020) for 'responsible translanguaging'. Having studied the use of English and Spanish in a dual-language preschool in the U.S., Hamman (2018) concluded that English was used most, which provided the English-speaking children with more opportunities to participate and show their expertise than the Spanish-speakers. In order to ensure equal participation and inclusion, it is necessary for professionals to monitor their language use.

The three excerpts illustrate that the practitioners monitored their language use: at the same time as creating translanguaging spaces (Li Wei, 2011) , they also tried to stick to a chosen

target language, Luxembourgish or French. They only switched languages if they felt that this contributed to understanding, communication or well-being. Some of the practitioners in the non-formal sector, not reported on here, switched languages without this reflective stance. There were a few situations where they moved to a child's home language without assessing the need for it. The children were communicating in Luxembourgish and the practitioners' unnatural switch to a home language 'othered' the children as well as preventing conversations where all children could take part (Kirsch & Seele, forthcoming). Any arbitrary mixing of languages void of pedagogical objectives is problematic because it may lead to exclusive practices.

Monitoring language and inclusion were a frequently discussed topic in the networking meetings and the coaching. Opening up to home languages required the practitioners to think about equity. It was easy for them to accommodate the needs of children whose home languages they knew but more difficult for other languages. Asked how Ms Vivian dealt with other home languages, she explained:

> I have to ensure that I collaborate a bit with the parents and get them on board, maybe as interpreters sometimes. Or showing the child in other ways that, maybe buying a book in her/his writing. (...) There are always possibilities, if I can't do it on the verbal level, well, then I can still do it somehow in other ways (…). But it is there [the language] it is present in the class and you are welcome with your language.
> (Interview by Mortini with Ms Vivian, May 2017)

This quote illustrates Ms Vivian's positive stance on multilingualism, her inclusive and collaborative multilingual practice, and her flexibility.

6. Conclusion

This article set out to analyse the challenges that ECEC practitioners in Luxembourg encountered when implementing a translanguaging pedagogy. In uncovering the steps required to develop a positive stance and a productive multilingual learning environment based on social-constructivist theories, the present study has contributed to our understanding of the difficulties that practitioners face in this process. They encountered and addressed several challenges: negative attitudes, a monolingual policy, their understanding of learning theories and pedagogy, and the need to monitor languages to guarantee responsible translanguaging. The fact that their professional learning took place between May 2016 and September 2017, is indicative of the duration of this process and is, therefore, another challenge. While attitudes, a teacher-centred pedagogy, and time have been mentioned as challenging aspects by Duarte and Günther (2018) and Vaish (2019 a, b), the present study confirms these challenges and adds others. Furthermore, the rich and longitudinal data provide insights into the ways in which the practitioners changed attitudes, understandings, strategies and practices (Poza, 2017; Kirsch et al., 2020). Furthermore, this is one of the first studies that examines the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies in ECEC.

The professional learning – a result of overcoming the problems encountered in the implementation – was only possible because the three practitioners were eager to develop new practices and the PD was long-term, collaborative and inquiry-based, and included coaching, meetings and training (Egert et al., 2018; Peleman et al., 2018). Therefore, we can add further challenges related to the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies: the sustainability of change as well as the need to find a sustainable model for professional development. In this particular case, the changes of the practitioners were sustainable (Breser,

2019). The question of how best to guide and support practitioners and how to organise PD in an effective way remains. Our PD only targeted a few practitioners as we did not have the resources to work in a similar supportive way with more. To ensure that a growing number of teachers implement translanguaging pedagogies and engage in strategic translanguaging that contributes to equal opportunities and social justice, it is important to familiarise practitioners with multilingual pedagogies in initial teacher education, and help them develop the above-mentioned attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Finally, this study provided further insights into the actual translanguaging pedagogies in ECEC, an under-researched field, and more particularly, into those of a multilingual context. The translanguaging pedagogy in the two classrooms in Luxembourg was transformative as it contributed to children's well-being, language awareness, language development, and positive attitudes to language learning (Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Velasco & Fialias, 2018; Young & Mary, 2016). Translanguaging had some similarities with the pedagogies in the Basque country (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017), Wales (Lewis et al., 2012) and the U.S. (Seltzer & García, 2019), for example the planned use of several languages, but it also differed. For example, the educational goal is not bilingualism. The translanguaging practices have also some unique features in Luxembourg because the context is multilingual, the school intake is highly diverse, there is a high number of institutional and homes languages used at school, the practitioners are multilingual. Given the implementation of plurilingual education in ECEC in 2017, future qualitative and quantitative research studies could examine changes in multilingual pedagogies in the years to come.

Funding

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